

ne peut jamais être assez considérable pour entraîner à sa suite un danger sérieux."¹ This assertion is not borne out by the case I have just related; and in another case, operated on by White Cooper, the hemorrhage lasted for thirty-seven hours, and the patient being eighty-seven years of age, serious doubts were entertained of saving her life.

39. *Night-Blindness, in Connection with Scurvy.*—The *Ophthalmic Hospital Reports* for July, 1859, contains a very interesting paper on this subject by Dr. ALEXANDER BRYSON.

"Night-blindness," Dr. B. remarks, "most unquestionably occurs much more frequently in scurvy than is generally supposed, but in consequence of the simultaneous existence of some more serious symptom, or of symptoms of a less ambiguous character, it frequently passes unnoticed. In fact, in the naval service, patients are generally placed on the sick-list before it occurs, or at all events before it becomes so decided as to induce the patient to complain of it. Still it is almost certain that scurvy occasionally shows itself without any concurrent defect of vision, while there are other instances in which nearly every second case is accompanied by it."

"The following is a remarkable instance of the prevalence of the disease, in connection with scurvy. The crew of Her Majesty's brigantine, 'Griffon,' employed on the west coast of Africa, for the prevention of the slave-trade, had been victualled on salt rations for five months consecutively, when several of the men began to complain that they could not see to do their duty on deck at night, though the moon shone brightly at the time. Amongst themselves it was called moon-blindness, consequently it did not cause much alarm, until out of about fifty white men, twenty-two were affected, and immediately after the sun went down, they had to be led about on the upper deck, in a helpless state of blindness. There was now just cause for alarm, as the vessel with so many men unfit for night duty, was hardly a match for any of the well-armed slavers so common on the coast at that period. Fortunately a man presented himself, complaining of a sore, and a swelling on the calf of one of his legs, the true nature of which there was no mistaking; on examination, his gums were found to be swollen and spongy. He was one of those affected with night-blindness; the other men similarly affected were next examined, as well as those whose vision by night was still good, when it was ascertained that all of the former presented the most unequivocal symptoms of scurvy, and a few of the latter had spongy gums. The officers, five in number, were not attacked either with scurvy or night-blindness, but they had a more varied diet than the men. To obtain fresh meat, fruit, and vegetables, the vessel anchored at Prince's Island, and three days afterwards nearly the whole of the hemeralopic patients had entirely recovered their vision.

"The ship's company of the 'Dolphin,' another African cruiser, had, in the year 1851, been a long time without obtaining any supplies of fresh meat or vegetables; consequently scorbutic symptoms made their appearance, and at the same time there were ten cases of night-blindness. The medical officer mentions that nearly all these men were able to distinguish objects at the distance of three yards by candle-light, and even to read a book held close to the candle; but the instant they went on the upper deck, they gradually began to lose sight of surrounding objects, and had to be led about from place to place. A few could plainly distinguish the stars and the top-gallant masts and yards, but below that plane they could not see anything. Two cases occurred in the 'Dart,' while employed in the Mozambique Channel, for the cure of which blisters and various other means were used; one improved, but the other resisted various modes of treatment, until the vessel anchored in Simon's Bay, and fresh provisions were issued to the crew, when the patient, to the astonishment of the assistant-surgeon, suddenly got well.

"Scurvy made its appearance in several vessels in the Black Sea in the year 1854, and with hardly an exception it was accompanied with night-blindness. In the 'Vengeance' eleven men were put on the sick-list for scurvy, but many

¹ *Gazette des Hôpitaux*, May 31st, 1859.

others were suffering in a less degree. Eight cases of night-blindness occurred at the same time; some of these patients showed scorbutic symptoms, while others were apparently free from them. None of the officers were affected with either of these diseases, which were simultaneously removed by a better diet.

"In 1855 there were upwards of seventy cases of scurvy in the 'Euryalus,' but two only of night-blindness were noticed. Her Majesty's ship, 'Brisk,' was seventy-two days in making a passage round Cape Horn to San Francisco; consequently during all that time no fresh meat or vegetables could be procured. Before she reached the above port, the surgeon examined the men, and found twelve with scorbutic symptoms; seven cases of night-blindness had occurred during the passage, and four of these were the worst cases of scurvy. They all recovered immediately after they obtained fresh meat and vegetables.

"One of the most remarkable instances of scorbutic night-blindness occurred in the 'Winchester,' while she was returning from India. Twenty cases were entered on the sick-list between Trincomalee and the Cape of Good Hope, but they all recovered when the vessel anchored at Simon's Town, and fresh provisions were issued to the crew; on the passage between the Cape and England, however, when the men had been for some time victualled on salt provisions, the disease reappeared in the same persons, and continued until they obtained fresh provisions at Spithead.

"In convict-ships proceeding to Australia, both scurvy and night-blindness have frequently made their appearance, but the latter often escapes notice in consequence of the prisoners being sent down into prison either at, or a little after, sunset. In the 'Marquis of Hastings,' which conveyed prisoners to Hobart Town in 1841, many cases of scurvy occurred, and there were ten of night-blindness, which presented no other symptoms of scorbutic disease.

"In all these, and in many other instances of a similar nature, the appearance of the disease simultaneously with scurvy, and its sudden disappearance when a better diet is obtained—the absence of the disease in vessels in which the men have a sufficiency of fresh meat and vegetables, even though employed in the same localities with others in which it has made its appearance—shows that it is entirely dependent on an improper or erroneous diet."

MIDWIFERY.

40. Statistical Study of the Causes and Relative Proportion of Stillbirths in Private Country Practice.—Dr. R. UVEDALE WEST has published (*Lancet*, Nov. 12, 1859) a tabular view of the stillbirths which occurred in 2,962 cases of midwifery, including 36 twin cases, and comprising, therefore, 2,998 children born. No account is taken of abortions. The following is a summary of this table:

"The total of stillbirths from all causes, as shown in the table given above, is 111 out of 2,998 children born; a proportion of 1 in 27. Of these, 50 were putrid at birth, with various special circumstances noticeable; 8 were cases of craniotomy; 7 were cases in which the death of the child was caused by difficult delivery of the head in footling births, the funis being compressed; in 7 cases, where the funis was prolapsed early in the labour, the death of the child was equally caused by compression of that important organ; 3 deaths are explained by *placenta prævia*; 6 by the severity of protracted labours left to the natural efforts; there were only 2 deaths from severe or protracted labour where instruments were used; in 1 case embryotomy was practised to effect the delivery of monstrously-adherent twins, accounting for the death of 2 children; in 2 cases the ovum was expelled entire before my arrival, and the children suffocated or drowned; 2 of the children exhibited deficient development of the head; 1 was dropsical—*anasarcous* and *ascitic*; 4 deaths are explained by profuse hemorrhage accompanying the labour; 2 by convulsions of the mother during or preceding the labour; in 1 case there was very clear evidence of latent compression of the funis during the labour; 1 death is explained by difficulty of